

# Castlecombe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101606
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	376600
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gavin Jones

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	207
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Beryl Magrath
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Castlecombe Road Mottingham London SE9 4AT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons and eight different teachers were seen. Inspectors met with groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, attended playtimes, lunchtimes and collective worship. They visited the breakfast club overseen by the governing body. They looked at planning, evidence of monitoring and self-evaluation, assessment data, the school's improvement plan, a range of policies, details of safeguarding, the minutes of meetings of the governing body and a range of pupils' books. They analysed 45 questionnaires from parents and carers, 106 from pupils and 21 from the staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school's actions to support the small number of groups which appeared to be making slow progress.
- The progress made across the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How well pupils' cultural development has been developed.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in monitoring the school in action.

## Information about the school

The school is of average size. There is a growing proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities and this is currently above average. Their main learning difficulties are connected to behaviour, emotional and social issues, and speech and language disorders. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, while the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school has its own nursery with 52 part-time places. About half of the children from the nursery enter the schools' Reception class. The school's governing body manages a breakfast club, which is run by school staff.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Castlecombe is a good school. It has consolidated its previous successes and tackled the issues from the last inspection. Senior leaders have improved the school, sharing the headteacher's strong vision for improvement. The school's accurate self-evaluation, together with a clear school improvement plan, which reflects the school's strengths and areas for development accurately, indicates that the school has good capacity to sustain improvements.

The school's pastoral care is good and has a positive effect on pupils' personal development from their earliest days in school. Almost all pupils say they feel safe in school. Teaching and learning are good overall. That ensures that the vast majority of pupils make good progress in their learning, with a small minority making excellent progress.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is successful, both in its Nursery and Reception classes, in giving children a good start to their education. Both classes work together well, providing a similar ethos, emphasis on learning from play and close links with parents and carers.

Pupils reach average levels of attainment by the time they leave. About a quarter of pupils reach the higher Level 5 for English and a third for mathematics, showing elements of outstanding progress. Pupils' skills in writing and mathematics, though, are slightly weaker than in reading at both key stages. Most able pupils, sometimes, however, make less progress than others, as the challenge for them is not always made clear enough in planning in some lessons. In a small minority of lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, the use of assessment to inform planning and to ensure pupils of all ability levels are challenged, especially the most able, is not as good as it might be.

Pupils are proud of their school and show good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has a range of productive partnerships with local schools, commercial enterprises and local Rotary clubs. All of those have a positive impact on pupils' achievement and personal development. There is a strong community spirit, evident in the way that younger and older pupils mix together and those from diverse cultural heritages are accepted and respected by everyone. The school has positive relationships with its parents and carers, particularly those who would otherwise find it difficult to work with the school. That has had a marked influence on behaviour, which is good throughout the school, and is helping to improve

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attendance rapidly. In spite of the best efforts of the school, attendance is still only average.

The school's leaders and governing body have been able to present and implement initiatives very successfully. The work of subject leaders is developing well. However, they have had insufficient support and time to enable them to be more specific in their support for colleagues whose teaching is satisfactory and not yet good. Although the responses to the staff questionnaire were unanimously positive, the school does not use the work of subject leaders to facilitate more sharing of good practice in teaching and learning, in order to raise the overall quality further.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 by:
  - reviewing assessment processes to ensure more accurate challenges in lessons, especially for able writers and mathematicians
  - providing subject leaders for numeracy and literacy with more advice and time to monitor their subjects, identifying areas for improvement
  - providing a range of short-term initiatives based on the Raising Achievement Programme.
- Improve the small amount of satisfactory teaching in numeracy and literacy to the same standards as that of the best seen across the school, so that by July 2012, all teaching is good, by:-
  - identifying areas for improvement through rigorous monitoring and providing individual support to teachers, in order to improve their practice
  - sharing best practice across the school through continuing professional development.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

2

Pupils enjoy school thoroughly, make good progress from low starting points and achieve well. Some of the highest achievement is seen in boys, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those whose heritage is not English, and a range of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities. Progress in writing and sometimes in mathematics is not as good as in reading. The school has had some success with long-term strategies for improvement, but it has not implemented short, well-focused interventions with very clear and measurable outcomes. All pupils are interested and involved in their learning, showing excitement when lessons are designed to capture their attention. A dance lesson, with both teacher and learning assistant taking a very active part, enthused pupils to become very involved in their learning. In another lesson, pupils made use of the school's wooded area in preparation for carrying out 'magic writing' in their own 'wonderland'. The setting helped pupils become much more involved in their writing. Because of the thoughtful planning and use of different styles of teaching, pupils not only enjoy the activities,

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but also make good gains in their learning.

Pupils’ behaviour is always good in lessons and around school. That supports their learning well. Older pupils enjoy putting on their yellow sweatshirts and helping at lunchtime, while others support younger children at play. The strong community spirit within the school setting and other activities locally is currently being extended further to give pupils a clear picture of life in other parts of the United Kingdom and beyond to such places as Uganda. Pupils’ cultural development is promoted well.

Many pupils take advantage of the good range of sporting clubs and activities on offer, in support of their healthy lifestyles. Attendance has improved year on year, thanks to the efforts of the school, and is now on the cusp of being above the national average. That, together with their sound basic skills, helps pupils to be satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is good and the strong relationships between pupils and their teachers do much to support learning. Opportunities to share good practice across the school are sometimes missed. Because of that, in a very small number of lessons, some teachers have not yet developed the strengths seen so clearly elsewhere. For example, in most, but not all lessons, learning objectives are shared with pupils and the pupils are given success criteria, so that they know when they have been successful. In many lessons, work is clearly set for the most able pupils, ensuring

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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that they also make good progress, but this is not yet consistent across the school. Marking is completed regularly and helps pupils to see what they need to do next in order to improve.

The curriculum has been adapted well, following a review, and is now more creative and interesting to pupils. Much work is centred on themes and topics and provides a broad range of experiences which help pupils to see that learning can be linked across a range of subjects. The impact of specialist music teaching is seen positively in the quality of singing in assembly and in the anticipation shown by pupils in all classes for their music lessons. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory and improving, with some evidence of this happening in the classroom as well as in the newly appointed suite. The curriculum is enriched well by after school activities, with well over half of the school involved on a regular basis. The breakfast club ensures that a small-but-regular group of attendees start their day off well by having breakfast, playing table-top games and being ready to work when school starts.

The school works hard and effectively to remove barriers to learning through its strong pastoral care and good guidance and support network in school. There are good transition arrangements, both into and out of the school, and good levels of support for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities. The school makes good use of outside agencies in the support of those pupils. The effective level of support has ensured that those pupils progress well in their learning. Further good-quality advice and support is given to families by the Family Worker. Recently, the school instigated a project designed to help build confidence in some potentially vulnerable pupils. It is proving successful.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Under the strong direction of the headteacher, the school is beginning, as described by the chair of governors, to 'blossom'. The school's self-evaluation is used to good effect to bring about improvements. For example, in order to improve pupils' numeracy skills, the school, now, divides its Year 3, 4 and 5 pupils into ability groups for mathematics. Although it is still early days, evaluations show that it is now beginning to have a positive effect on attainment. However, some of the initiatives, while being positive, are long term and not short, sharply focused interventions, such as those in the Raising Achievement Programme. Target setting is robust and

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subsequent tracking highlights those pupils in need of intervention programmes. Such information is used in the termly pupil progress meetings, in order to ensure that those in danger of underachievement receive help. That results in good progress for almost all groups and ensures that equality of opportunity is secure for all. The school implements strategies to tackle discrimination rigorously and offers an inclusive learning environment.

The overall pattern of teaching remains good and senior leaders have plans to extend the good capacity of middle leaders to be more supportive through their monitoring and subsequent professional development. The governing body has been influential in determining the direction of the school. It is rigorous in ensuring the safety of pupils through its comprehensive range of safeguarding provision. The provision is reviewed regularly and updated where appropriate. Child protection procedures are of good quality and well managed. Staff are well trained and risk assessments and health and safety checks are in place.

Links with parents and carers are positive and their views are gathered and, where possible, they are acted upon, in the spirit of school improvement. Other partnerships with a local college and a range of schools have given good support to the development of the curriculum and improvements in pupils’ personal development. Those relationships, along with careful checks on expenditure and pupils’ good achievement, show that the school provides good value for money. A recent evaluation of the school’s progress in community cohesion has led to further developments being planned on a more national and international level, in order to promote the school’s good work further afield.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly into the Nursery, even though they only attend on a part-time basis. They are made to feel welcome by the caring staff and enjoy the colourful and interesting environment. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, children enjoy initiating their own learning, with adults intervening to help develop speaking and listening skills and question children about what they might do to extend their activities.

Children enter with a range of skills which are often below the levels seen nationally. Especially low are personal and social skills and elements of communication and language. Adults provide good, focused teaching to improve a wide range of skills and, as a result, children make good progress in both classes. For example, in a Reception class lesson, the teacher worked with a clear focus on individual children, successfully helping with their number recognition and counting to ten. By the time children enter Year 1, attainment across many areas of learning is average. They make particularly good progress in their personal awareness, their use of mathematical numbers and their physical development. Less progress is made in their creative and writing development, with the latter low on entry.

Accurate observations are made by all practitioners and used to help set the next steps in children’s learning. Through good care and support, children become confident and eager learners. They play well together and share resources. The outdoor classroom is in daily use and allows for pupils to experience a wide range of physical activities. However, work indoors is not always reflected in the work outdoors. The team of adults is led well and work well together, forging very good links with parents and carers. Children with special education needs and/or disabilities, or who speak English as an additional language, are supported with great care and success and all children are made to feel safe and secure.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A small minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Their views were overwhelmingly positive. Of the 13 questions in the questionnaire, more than 90% of parents gave positive answers to 10 of them. Over 95% said their children enjoyed school, were kept safe, prepared well for their next school and that their

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children were happy in school. A few parents and carers did not feel that their children were making progress. The inspection found that pupils make good progress from their starting points in the school, with a small minority making excellent progress. A few parents and carers felt that their suggestions were not acted upon. The inspection found an example where, some parents and carers who did not feel confident in helping their children at home were provided support through meetings and workshops. A questionnaire confirmed the success of the project.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castlecombe Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	64	15	33	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	71	11	24	1	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	21	47	21	47	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	51	16	36	4	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	56	17	38	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	20	44	23	51	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	47	23	51	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	38	28	62	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	20	44	23	51	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	40	23	51	3	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	38	22	49	5	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	49	19	42	4	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	26	58	17	38	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of **Castlecombe Primary School, Mottingham, SE9 4AT**

It was lovely to talk to so many of you when we visited your school. We judged that the school is good. You leave school with similar standards of attainment to those of most other children of your age, having made good progress during your time at school. That is mainly because of good teaching and your good behaviour. You feel safe and feel that you receive excellent care from all of the staff. It is the overall good care and support which contributes to the many good aspects of your personal development. Your parents and carers recognise that and know that you enjoy school and are safe happy there.

To help make sure that improvements continue, we have asked the school to do two things. We want the school to help you reach higher standards in writing and mathematics. Although you make good progress, your results are still only broadly average. We want the school to help subject leaders to look closely at how writing and mathematics are taught, ensure that assessments help teachers set realistic targets for all groups of pupils and put into place short-term schemes to give help to particular groups of children. We want the school to make sure also that all teaching gets even better by allowing teachers who are sometimes outstanding to share the way they teach with others.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Jones  
Lead Inspector

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